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A DESCRIPTIVE
GEOGRAPHY
OF
WARWICKSHIRE,
WITH AN
OUTLINE GEOGRAPHY
OF THE
ADJACENT COUNTIES.



BY
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Head Master of the National School, Stratford-on-Avon.

Warwick:
HENRY T. COOKE AND SON, PUBLISHERS,
HIGH STREET.

1872.

*From the collection of the
Warwickshire Record Office*

PREFACE.

THIS little work was written as a Competing Essay for the Prize offered by LORD LEIGH, Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, for the best Essay on Local Geography, and was awarded the Prize.

It is now issued for use in Schools, under the new regulations by which Local Geography is to form a part of the school course.

CHAPTER I.

POSITION, BOUNDARIES, SIZE, ETC.

1.—**Position.** Warwickshire is one of the fourteen midland counties of England, situated nearly in the centre of the country. It lies in a north-westerly direction from London, from which it is distant about 90 miles. It forms part of the diocese of Worcester, and is included in the midland circuit. One small portion is entirely cut off from the rest of the county, and lies in Worcestershire; whilst within its limits is included a small piece of Worcestershire, a few miles south of Stratford-on-Avon. The nearest seaport is Gloucester, which is about 50 miles distant from the centre of the county.

2.—**Boundaries.** Warwickshire is bounded on the **NORTH** by Staffordshire and Derbyshire; on the **NORTH-EAST** by Leicestershire; on the **SOUTH-EAST** by Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire; on the **SOUTH-WEST** by Gloucestershire; on the **WEST** by Worcestershire and Staffordshire. The boundary on the **N.E.** is formed by **WATLING STREET**, one of the old Roman roads which ran from Kent by London, to Caernarvon in Wales.

3.—**Size.** Warwickshire is below the average of English counties in point of size. It is about 50 miles long from north to south, by about 35 wide from east to west, and about 150 in circumference. It contains 897 square miles, or 563,946 acres.

(The actual greatest length of the county is $51\frac{1}{4}$ miles, from near Honey-hill in the north, to Rollwright stones in the south. The greatest breadth, from the eastern extremity of the county just above the Northampton Road by Hillmorton, to the western extremity at Headless Cross is 36 miles.)

4.—Shape. This county is of very irregular shape, but almost approaching a lozenge. It is widest about the middle, and tapers towards the north and south.

CHAPTER II.

DIVISIONS.

1.—Warwickshire is divided into TWO PARTS, virtually forming two counties, though there is but one Lord-Lieutenant, and one Sheriff and Chairman of Quarter Sessions. These divisions are—1, NORTH WARWICKSHIRE—2, SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE. Each division sends two members to Parliament.

In 1842 the city of Coventry and surrounding parishes, which previously formed a distinct county, were annexed to Warwickshire.

2.—Hundreds. The county of Warwick is further divided into four hundreds, viz.: Barlichway, Kineton, (or Kington) Knightlow and Hemlingford. The southern division contains Barlichway, Kineton, and part of Knightlow hundreds. The northern division consists of Hemlingford and the other part of Knightlow.

3.—Sub-divisions of Hundreds. Each of the hundreds is again sub-divided thus:—

1.—BARLICHWAY into four divisions, viz:

- i. Alcester division, containing 15 parishes, 2 townships.
- ii. Henley division, containing 8 parishes, 1 hamlet, 3 townships.
- iii. Snitterfield division, containing 6 parishes.
- iv. Stratford division, containing 9 parishes and 1 township.

2.—KINETON (or Kington,) into four parts, viz.:

- i. Brailes division, containing 17 parishes and 2 townships.
- ii. Burton Dassett division, containing 6 parishes.
- iii. Kineton division, containing 12 parishes.
- iv. Warwick division, containing 18 parishes, 2 townships.

3.—KNIGHTLOW, into four parts, viz:

- i. Kenilworth division, containing 13 parishes.
- ii. Southam division, containing 26 parishes, 2 hamlets, 1 township.
- iii. Kirby division, containing 29 parishes, 8 townships.
- iv. Rugby division, containing 16 parishes, 6 townships.

4.—HEMLINGFORD, into four parts, viz.:

- i. Atherstone division, containing 19 parishes, 8 townships.
- ii. Birmingham division, containing 3 parishes.
- iii. Coleshill division, containing 14 parishes, 1 township.
- iv. Solihull division, containing 6 parishes, 4 townships.

4.—Poor Law Unions. Warwickshire contains 19 Poor Law Unions and parts of Unions, namely, Alcester, Aston, Atherstone, Birmingham, Banbury, Chipping Norton, Coventry, Foleshill, Hinckley, Lutterworth, Meriden, Nuneaton, Rugby, Shipston-on-Stour, Solihull, Southam, Stratford-on-Avon, Tamworth and Warwick.

CHAPTER III.

NATURAL FEATURES, CLIMATE, SOIL, ETC.

1.—General Aspect, Elevations, &c. A portion of Warwickshire forms part of the CENTRAL TABLE LAND of England, the general elevation of which is about 400 feet, and forms an important watershed. Another portion of the county is included in the BIRMINGHAM TABLE LAND, which extends from the Trent to the Avon. Its general elevation is 300 feet.

Warwickshire is divided by Camden into two parts, the FELDON or plain country south of the Avon, and the WOODLAND lying towards the north. The whole county is well-watered, and abounds in pasture-lands, having been long noted as a celebrated grazing country. It contains no hills of importance, but is gently undulating.

Hills. The chief hills are branches of the COTSWOLD and EDGE HILLS. The highest points of land are at Corley (a few miles N. of Coventry,) and in the vicinity of Packington (about midway between Coventry and Birmingham). The Edge Hills form the south-east boundary of the county, dividing it from Oxfordshire. About Brailes it is considerably elevated, and commands an extensive and picturesque view. On its slopes was formerly a gigantic figure of a horse, from which this district was called the "Vale of the Red Horse."

2.—Rivers. Warwickshire contains but one navigable river, the Avon. The principal rivers are the AVON and the TAME, with their tributaries.

a. The AVON rises in Northamptonshire, near Naseby, and enters Warwickshire at Dove Bridge, under Watling Street. Its chief tributaries are—the Swift, Leam, Tach-brook, Dene and Stour, on the left bank—the Sowe,

Sherbourne and Arrow, on the right bank. The main stream has a course of 57 miles through the county, and becomes navigable for vessels of 40 tons, below Stratford. It enters the Severn at Tewkesbury, shortly after leaving Warwickshire. The current is very gentle, but in winter, and after heavy rains, floods of considerable extent occur in its lower course. It flows chiefly through meadow and corn lands. The principal places on its banks are Rugby, (a short distance to the south of the stream,) Newbold-on-Avon, Church Lawford, Wolston, Ryton, Bubbenhall, Stoneleigh, WARWICK, Barford, Hampton Lucy, Charlecote, Alveston, Stratford-on-Avon, Binton and Bidford. Above Warwick it is often called the Dove.

TRIBUTARIES. Of its tributaries the

1.—SWIFT is a small stream 10 miles long, which enters the Avon near Rugby.

2.—Sowe rises near a village of that name, and flows to Baginton, where it receives the SHERBURN from Coventry, and thence into the Avon at Stoneleigh.

3.—LEAM is a considerable stream, giving its name to the important town of Leamington. It has a tributary called the ITCHEN, which joins the Leam at Marton. The principal places by which it flows are Grandborough, Birdingbury, Marton, Wappenbury, Honington, Offchurch, Radford Semele, and Leamington. It joins the Avon a little above Warwick.

4.—TACHBROOK, } small streams which join the

5.—SHERBOURNE, } Avon between Warwick and Stratford.

6.—DENE, 13 miles long, joins the Avon at Charlecote.

7.—STOUR rises in the hills to the east of Long Compton, runs in a N.W. direction, receiving many small streams. It is 24 miles long, and joins the Avon a little below Stratford. The chief places on its banks are Long Compton, Cherington, Burmington, Shipston-on-Stour, Halford, and Atherstone.

8.—ARROW is the last feeder of the Avon. It is 19 miles long; rising in the western verge of the county and joining the Avon at Salford Priors. The chief places on it

are Ipsley, Studley, Coughton, Alcester, Wixford, and Salford. At Alcester it receives the ALNE which rises near Lapworth, flowing by Preston Bagot, Wootton Wawen, Little and Great Alne, and Kinwarton.

b. The Tame rises in Staffordshire, enters Warwick a little north of Birmingham, from whence it runs nearly east to Lea Marston. It then turns northwards, leaving the county at Tamworth, and finally joins the Trent in Staffordshire. Its entire length is 42 miles, of which 20 are in Warwickshire. The principal places in this county by which it flows are Castle Bromwich, Water Orton, Lea Marston, Kingsbury, and Tamworth. Its chief tributaries are the Rea, Blythe, Bourne, and Anker.

TRIBUTARIES. Of its tributaries, the

1.—REA is a stream 12 miles long, which flows through Birmingham, joining the Tame near Aston.

2.—BLYTHE is 26 miles long, rising near Packwood, and flowing by Solihull, Hampton, and Coleshill, joining the Tame near Lea Marston.

3.—BOURNE, a stream 10 miles long, joins the Tame a little to the north of the Blythe.

4.—ANKER is 26 miles long, it skirts the north-eastern extremity of the county. It rises near Wolvey and flows in a north-westerly direction by Burton Hastings, Caldecote, Grendon, entering the Tame at Tamworth; it also flows near Atherstone. In its course it receives the GRIFF BROOK and the SENCE.

A feeder of the Cherwell and of the Thames rises near Burton Dassett.

3.—Geological Features. The geological features of Warwickshire belong chiefly to the SECONDARY FORMATION, including a seam of COAL which extends for about 16 miles between Coventry and Nuneaton, by about 3 wide. The other strata are OOLITE LIAS, NEW RED SANDSTONE, MILLSTONE GRIT, LIMESTONE, GREENSTONE, and MARL. The chief soils are RED LOAM, SANDY LOAM, and CLAY with LIME.

4.—**Climate.** Owing to the central position of Warwickshire, and the absence of any great inequalities of surface, the climate is mild and the vegetation early. The most prevalent winds are from the south-west, and are frequently accompanied with rain. In spring, the easterly winds often prevail, occasionally making themselves felt about the middle of May. The county is however not subject to any particular excess of heat or cold.

5.—**Soil.** The soils are generally fertile, but very various, comprising almost every kind, except those which contain chalk and flint. The chief kinds are

a. A STRONG CLAY LOAM, RESTING ON LIMESTONE. This soil occurs in the following districts:—

1.—The south and south-eastern part of the county, *i.e.* the tract south of a line drawn from near Willoughby on the borders of Northamptonshire to the mouth of the Stour.

2.—The north-eastern extremity of the county by the Anker, to the N.E. of a line from Nuneaton to Tamworth.

3.—Great part of the hundred of Barlichway, lying south of a line from Warwick to Tanworth, and including Henley-in-Arden and Alcester.

4.—A tract extending south-westwards from Warwick to Stratford-on-Avon.

b. A LIGHT SANDY SOIL, MIXED WITH GRAVEL, well suited for turnips. This occurs

1.—In a tract lying between Rugby and Grandborough, bounded on the E. by Northamptonshire, on the west by the Coventry and Southam road.

2.—A tract extending from Meriden northwards to Staffordshire; chiefly occupying the valleys of the Blythe and Tame.

c. A LIGHT POOR MOORY SOIL, lying between the last-mentioned and the clay district in the north-east. A similar soil occupies the vicinity of Sutton Coldfield.

d. THE REST OF THE COUNTY consists chiefly of red sandy loam and red clay loam, resting on freestone, limestone, or sharp gravel.

6.—**Wastes, &c.** Warwickshire formerly contained much common land which has since been enclosed. The only commons left of any extent are **SUTTON COLDFIELD**, and **SUTTON PARK**, and in the vicinity of **COVENTRY**. The first of these is a bleak and cheerless tract extending into **Staffordshire**, containing 13,000 acres. **SUTTON PARK** lies to the N.W. of the town and contains 3500 acres, it was granted to the poor of the town by Bishop Vesey. Outside Coventry are about 3000 acres of grass common-land, on which the freemen of the city have the exclusive right of pasturing their cattle from Aug. 13th to Feb. 13th.

CHAPTER IV.

NATURAL PRODUCTIONS.

1.—**Minerals.** The mineral productions of Warwickshire consist chiefly of coal, ironstone, limestone, freestone, and a blue flagstone.

a. **COAL.** The best quality coal is found at Bedworth, on the Warwickshire coal field between Coventry and Nuneaton. This coal field is 16 miles long by 3 wide, the seam being 3 to 4 feet thick. Coal is also raised at Griffhollow, Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton, Hunts-hall, and Oldbury. The bed is continued northwards to Merevale, Polesworth, and Wilnecote.

b. **IRONSTONE** is found at Oldbury and Merevale.

c. **LIMESTONE** is found in great extent, being chiefly quarried at Bearley, Grafton, Stretton, Princethorpe, Upton, Harbury, Wilnecote, Bidford, Newbold-on-Avon, &c. It is of a dark colour and produces strong lime.

d. **FREESTONE** abounds in the neighbourhood of Warwick, Leamington, Kenilworth, Coventry, &c., chiefly

where the soil is light and sandy. It is used for building purposes, especially for public offices, &c.

e. BLUE FLAGSTONE is found in many places. Large quarries of it exist in the vicinity of Bidford and Wilmcote. It is used for paving and flooring.

f. MARL of various colours and excellence abounds in the western part of the county.

g. BLUE CLAY of a peculiar kind, having some of the properties of soap, is found in the eastern parts of Warwickshire.

2.—Vegetable Productions. Warwickshire is a well-wooded county, though it is specially noted for its grazing lands. The best wooded portions are the middle, western, and northern. The ancient forest of Arden formerly occupied the greater part of the county. It contains several parks, the Leigh estate being the best wooded in the county. There are several orchards but none of large extent; also several thriving plantations.

1.—TREES. The principal coppice trees are

THE OAK, which forms a large proportion and is of remarkably fine growth. The ELM, which is very common and very fine, especially in the valley of the Avon. The ASH, HAZEL, ALDER, BIRCH, BEECH, LIME, are also very common. The hedgerows contain many trees; in the northern parts of the country the HAZEL and BRAMBLE chiefly prevail.

2.—PASTURES. Near 300,000 acres of land in Warwickshire are devoted to pasture. Of this about 235,000 acres are permanent meadow and pasture, whilst the quantity of land under artificial grasses is about 60,000 acres. It is reckoned that of this about 80 or 85,000 acres are mown yearly for hay; 10 to 15,000 acres of artificial grass are cut annually for green food for cattle, the rest being pastured by sheep and cattle. The most extensive tracts of pasture are in the eastern and north-eastern parts of the county. Rich pastures also occur in the south-eastern portions towards Oxfordshire and along the entire course of the Avon.

3.—CROPS. The crops are very various, the chief being wheat, barley, rye, oats, pease, beans, turnips, potatoes, and tares or vetches.

WHEAT is sown once in 4 or 6 years on the richer soils, not so often on the less fertile.

BARLEY is largely grown for malt, being thus greatly consumed in the county.

RYE is seldom sown except upon the light poor sandy soils, and chiefly as food for sheep in spring.

CABBAGES, CARROTS, and PARSNIPS, are only cultivated in gardens.

PEASE. Two kinds are grown, one a finer sort for domestic purposes, the other (gray) chiefly for fattening pigs.

TURNIPS are largely grown in all the lighter and drier soils; they are eaten by sheep upon the land.

VETCHES or TARES are grown for sheep and horses; generally two crops a year.

FLAX is cultivated to a small extent in some parts.

GRASSES. The principal artificial grass crops are red and white clover and rag-grass.

3.—Animal Productions.

1. CATTLE. Many breeds of cattle are fed in Warwickshire, but none are peculiar to the county.

For GRAZING, the Scotch and Hereford oxen and the long-horned heifers and cows are preferred.

For BREEDING, the long-horned Lancashire have the preference.

For THE DAIRY, the Yorkshire, long-horned, and Durham, stand first.

2. SHEEP. The chief breeds of sheep are the old Warwickshire (now almost extinct) and the new Leicestershire. These two breeds have been much intermingled and are now bred in great perfection. A few Wiltshire, South Down, Welsh, and Spanish sheep are also fed. The Leicestershire is the favourite with graziers. A mixed sort, some with grey, some with black faces are kept upon the commons.

3. HORSES, a large heavy kind are in common use. Horses for riding, hunting, and carriage work, are also bred.

4. PIGS. Favourite breed, a large white kind, attaining to an enormous size.

CHAPTER V.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION.

The only navigable river in Warwickshire is the lower Avon; this circumstance for a long time kept the county back. It has now, however, good artificial communications.

1.—Canals. The principal canals in Warwickshire are:—

a. THE BIRMINGHAM AND FAZELEY CANAL, $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, between Birmingham and Fazeley; joins Coventry canal near Tamworth. It is 30 feet wide, $4\frac{1}{2}$ deep, admits boats of 22 tons. Constructed 1790.

b. THE COVENTRY CANAL, 27 miles long. Important line of communication between London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. Constructed 1790. Specially used for the coal field.

c. THE ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH CANAL starts from the Coventry canal near Nuneaton, enters Leicestershire at Hinckley and runs thence to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. It is about 40 miles long, but only 7 are in Warwickshire.

d. THE OXFORD CANAL is 90 miles long. It leaves the Coventry canal at Longford near Coventry. Its course is very irregular. It runs by Brinklow and Harborough Magna to the borders of Leicestershire. It then turns southwards, and passing in and out of Northamptonshire, finally quits Warwickshire for Oxford near Wormleighton. It is important as connecting London with the western counties. It is 30 feet wide and 5 deep.

e. THE BIRMINGHAM AND WARWICK CANAL commences at Birmingham, where it joins the Fazeley Canal, runs in a S.E. direction to Warwick, and is thence continued under the name of

f. THE WARWICK AND NAPTON CANAL, to the Oxford Canal near Napton-on-the Hill. The first (*e*) is 25 miles long, has 32 locks, and a tunnel 300 yards in length; the latter (*f*) is 15 miles long.

g. THE BIRMINGHAM AND STRATFORD CANAL starts from the Worcester and Birmingham Canal at King's Norton in Worcestershire, runs in a S.E. direction to Lapworth, then southwards to the Avon at Stratford-on-Avon. At Lapworth it communicates with the Warwick and Birmingham Canal. It is 23 miles long.

h. BIRMINGHAM AND WORCESTER CANAL. A small portion only of this canal is in Warwickshire.

By means of these canals direct water communication is kept up between London and the northern and western counties, and indeed with all parts of the country. They have been the chief cause of the rapid rise of the county in wealth and importance.

2.—Roads. The principal roads are—

1st. One entering the county from Chipping Norton at Long Compton, which after passing Shipston-on-Stour, divides into two branches, one running nearly due north by Warwick, Kenilworth, Coventry and Nuneaton, entering Leicestershire near Hinckley; the other passing Stratford-on-Avon, Henley-in-Arden and Birmingham, to Staffordshire.

From Kenilworth another branch goes northwards to Tamworth.

2nd. The Banbury and Buckingham Road enters Warwickshire at Shotteswell, and runs N.W. to Warwick.

3rd. Two great lines of road start from Daventry, and after diverging to Coventry on the one hand, and Warwick on the other, unite again at Birmingham.

From the Coventry branch at Great Packington, a road runs off through Coleshill to Lichfield.

4th. A road from Evesham runs north-eastwards through the county past Alcester and Henley-in-Arden. A branch of it goes from Alcester to Birmingham.

5th. The old Roman Fosse Way crosses the county in a N.E. direction, in a direct line.

6th. Watling Street, another Roman road, skirts the county on the N.E., crossing the Fosse Way at High Cross.

The roads are kept in good repair, material necessary for that purpose being abundant.

3.—**Railways.** Warwickshire has quite a network of railways, all centering towards Birmingham, by which means easy and quick communication is kept up with all parts of the kingdom. The great lines are—

1st. THE LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN, which enters the county at Rugby, and passes thence to Nuneaton, Atherstone and Tamworth, to Staffordshire and the north.

A BRANCH goes from Rugby to Coventry, Hampton-in-Arden and Birmingham.

ANOTHER BRANCH runs from Leamington through Rugby to Stamford, &c.

ANOTHER BRANCH goes from Coventry to Leamington, through Kenilworth.

ANOTHER BRANCH from Coventry to Nuneaton, through Foleshill and Bedworth.

ANOTHER BRANCH runs from Nuneaton to Leicester.

AND ANOTHER from Birmingham to Sutton Coldfield.

2nd. THE GREAT WESTERN from Oxford and Banbury, enters the county at Fenny Compton, and passes thence by Southam Road, Leamington, Warwick, Hatton, Knowle and Solihull to Birmingham, and thence to Liverpool, &c.

A BRANCH runs from Hatton to Stratford-on-Avon, and thence to Honeybourne, where it joins the G.W. line from Oxford to Worcester.

3rd. THE MIDLAND has a branch from Derby, through Tamworth, to Whitacre Junction.

ANOTHER from Leicester through Nuneaton, also to Whitacre Junction, and thence to Birmingham.

ANOTHER SHORT BRANCH runs from Whitacre Junction to Hampton-in-Arden, where it joins the London and North Western line.

A line called the EAST AND WEST JUNCTION was commenced a few years back, to run from Stratford-on-Avon through Kineton, to Fenny Compton, and thence to Blisworth, thus uniting the great lines of eastern traffic with the western, and forming a more direct line of communication across the country. The portion from Fenny Compton to Kineton is completed, the rest is in progress.

All stations on the lines of any note are provided with the Telegraph.

CHAPTER VI.

INHABITANTS, INDUSTRIAL PURSUITS, TOWNS, ETC.

1.—Population. Warwickshire contained, according to the census of 1861, a population of 561,855. The Northern Division contained 460,347; the Southern Division contained 101,508.

In 1801 the total population of the county was 208,109, shewing an increase in 60 years of 353,746.

The number of inhabitants to the square mile was 450, but nearly two thirds were situated in the chief towns.

According to the census of 1861, there were in the County—

ONE TOWN with over 100,000 INHABITANTS, viz.: Birmingham, which contained 296,076.

THREE between 10,000 AND 100,000, namely, Coventry (41,647), Leamington (17,958), Warwick (10,570).

FIFTEEN TOWNS AND PARISHES between 2,000 AND 10,000, namely, Alcester (2,128), Atherstone (3,857), Bedworth (3,968), Chilvers-Coton (2,764), Coleshill (2,053), Erdington (3,906), Foleshill (8,140), Kenilworth (3,013), Polesworth (2,541), Rugby (7,818), Solihull (3,329), Stratford-on-Avon (3,672), Studley (2,230), Sutton Coldfield (4,662), Tamworth (4,326).

TWENTY-SIX PARISHES, &c., contained between 1,000 AND 2,000 inhabitants.

2.—Industrial Pursuits. Warwickshire is celebrated as a commercial and manufacturing county, as well as for its grazing and husbandry. Of the inhabitants, 6 per cent. were returned in 1861 as engaged in agriculture, whilst 22 per cent. were occupied in commerce, trade or manufacture. The manufacturing populace chiefly occupy the northern part, being specially centered in Birmingham and its environs, and Coventry. South Warwickshire and a considerable part of the north, depend chiefly on agricultural pursuits. In the north-eastern portion a part of the population are engaged in mining operations. The manufactures of Birmingham are celebrated all over the world, being sent to the remotest countries.

The **OBJECTS OF CULTURE, &c.**, have been described in Chapter IV.

The **CHIEF MANUFACTURES** are—

HARDWARE, ARMS, TOYS, &c., carried on at Birmingham.

RIBBONS, SILKS, CLOCKS and WATCHES, at Coventry.

RIBBONS and SILKS are also made at Astley, Chilvers Coton, Foleshill, Nuneaton and Sowe.

HATS at Atherstone.

COMBS at Kenilworth. (This trade has greatly diminished.)

FLAX and YARN at Tamworth and Berkswell.

NEEDLES and FISH-HOOKS at Alcester, Ipsley, Sambourne and Studley.

GELATINE and KITCHEN RANGES at Warwick.

BREWING is extensively carried on at many places. Many hands are also employed in the **COLLIERIES, IRON-**

MINES, BRICK and LIME-KILNS, PAPER MAKING and BOATING (*i.e.* conveying goods in barges along the canals.)

3.—**Government Representation, &c.** The government of Warwickshire is administered by one Lord-Lieutenant, one Sheriff and one Chairman of Quarter Sessions, about 70 Deputy-Lieutenants, and about 176 Magistrates.

The entire county is represented in Parliament by 11 Members: of these two are elected by North Warwickshire, two by South Warwickshire, three by the Borough of Birmingham, two by the Borough of Warwick, and two by the Borough of Coventry.

4.—**TOWNS, &c.** Warwickshire contains

THREE PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHs—Birmingham, Coventry and Warwick.

FOUR MUNICIPAL BOROUGHs—Warwick, Coventry, Stratford-on-Avon and Birmingham.

ONE ROYAL TOWN—Sutton Coldfield.

SIXTEEN MARKET TOWNS—Birmingham, Coventry, Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon, Sutton Coldfield, Alcester, Atherstone, Coleshill, Henley-in-Arden, Kenilworth, Kington, Leamington Priors, Nuneaton, Rugby, Solihull and Southam. And about

FOUR HUNDRED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS.

Of the towns the principal are—

BIRMINGHAM, a Parliamentary and Municipal borough and market town, in the hundred of Hemlingford. It lies in the N.W. corner of the county, and is 20 miles from Warwick and 113 from London. It is one of the great centres of railway and canal communication, and from its wealth and population, ranks as the capital of the midland counties. In point of population it stands fourth in England, the order being 1 London, 2 Liverpool, 3 Manchester, 4 Birmingham. Its present greatness and importance is of modern and almost recent growth, though it has been a town from very old times. It is the grand centre of a vast manufacturing and mining district, comprising many densely-populated towns and villages, and is the great *dépôt* for their goods. Birmingham is the special seat of

the hardware manufacture, and is celebrated all over the world for the excellence of its goods. The chief objects are rifles, muskets, swords, army accoutrements, machinery, silver and plated wares, glass, jewellery, toys, &c., &c., &c.

The population of the town in 1871 was 343,696. The enormous and rapid growth of the place is shewn in the fact that in 1801 the population was only 70,670, being an increase in 70 years of over 273,000.

COVENTRY is an important manufacturing town, a Parliamentary and Municipal borough in the hundred of Knightlow. It lies a little to the north of the centre of the county. Till recently it formed a city and county of itself. The Sherbourne, a tributary of the Sowe flows by it. Coventry derives its name from having been built round a CONVENT, which was destroyed by the Danes in 1016. It is a place of great historical importance. The chief manufactures of Coventry are ribbon weaving and clock and watch making; there are also iron-foundries and manufactories for trimmings, carriages, stockings, lace, &c., &c. The French treaty of 1861 threw a great many hands out of employment and seriously impaired the trade of the place. There are about 3000 acres of common land outside the city which have been noticed in Chapter III.

The population of Coventry in 1871 was 41,350, as against 15,034 in 1801, shewing an increase of 26,316.

WARWICK is the county town and a Municipal and Parliamentary borough. It lies on the right of the Avon a little to the S.W. of the centre of the county, and is 93 miles from London. Warwick is an ancient town and famous in history, especially as connected with the Earls of Warwick. Its castle (unhappily lately seriously damaged by fire) is the most perfect specimen of a feudal residence now standing. The business of the town is chiefly in connection with the corn and general trade, there are also some large flour mills, malthouses, ironfoundries, breweries, wharves, &c., and the principal manufactory of gelatine in the kingdom. The assizes, quarter sessions for the county and for the borough, and a county court are

held here. It is also the head-quarters for the militia and yeomanry. The county gaol (a model prison) is situated at Warwick; the other places of note are St. Mary's Church, Warwick Castle, the Earl of Leicester's Hospital, Market-hall and Museum, the County-hall, &c. It is a dull town except when periodically stirred up by the assizes, the drilling of the militia, and the races. The latter are of some importance, taking place on the common, which lies on the west side of the town. The population in 1871 was 11,001.

LEAMINGTON PRIORS is about two miles from Warwick. It is a large and fashionable watering place. It stands on the Leam, and is a handsome well-built modern town. At the close of the last century it was but an agricultural village. It owes its rapid rise and celebrity to its mineral waters, which possess valuable medicinal properties. The population in 1871 was 22,730. In 1811 it contained 60 houses and 543 inhabitants.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, a market town and Municipal borough, eight miles S.W. of Warwick, lies on the right bank of the Avon. It is chiefly an agricultural town, *i.e.* the centre of an important agricultural district. Malting and brewing are somewhat extensively carried on, the latter being of considerable note. There is also an important weekly cattle sale or market. Stratford is, however, renowned throughout the civilized world as the birthplace, residence, and burial place of Shakespeare. The house in which he was born, the site of New Place where he lived, and the church where he is buried, are annually visited by many thousands of persons from all parts of the civilized world, Americans forming a large proportion of the visitors.

ALCESTER is a market town, 13 miles from Warwick, on the banks of the Arrow. It was a Roman station on the Icknield street. Needles are made here, and there are extensive brick and lime kilns, but the bulk of the inhabitants are engaged in agriculture. Population in 1861 was 2138.

ATHERSTONE, a market town, 14 miles from Coventry.

COLESHILL, a market town, ten miles east of Birmingham on the Cole; the Blythe flows past it. Population 4998.

HENLEY-IN-ARDEN, a market town, ten miles from Warwick, on the Stratford and Birmingham road. Population 1069.

KENILWORTH, a market town, four miles from Warwick, contains celebrated ruins of Kenilworth Castle. It had at one time an extensive manufacture of combs, but this has much decayed. A cattle fair is held here. Population 3013.

KINETON or **KINGTON**, an old and decayed market town, eleven miles from Warwick. The market is scarcely used. Population 1077.

EDGEHILL. The celebrated battle of Edgehill was fought in the near vicinity of Kineton, between the troops of Charles I. and those of the Parliament, in 1642.

NUNEATON, a market town, nine miles east of Coventry. The Anker runs through it. The chief industry is the ribbon manufacture. The Warwickshire coal field passes the town. Some coal-pits are worked here. Population 4645.

RUGBY, a market town, 16 miles from Warwick. Celebrated for its Grammar School, where the sons of some of the best families in England are educated. It is also an important railway junction. Chief industries—brewing, iron foundries, brick and tile works. Population 7818.

SOLIHULL, a market town, seven miles from Birmingham on the Blythe. Population 3329.

SOUTHAM, a market town, twelve miles S.E. of Coventry. Population 1674.

SUTTON COLDFIELD, a market town, seven miles from Birmingham, on a branch of the Tame. It contains a manufactory for making edge-tools, and for boring gun-barrels. The "Cold Field" (see Ch. III.) lies to the south of the town. Population 4662.

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORY AND EMINENT MEN.

1.—History.

ANCIENT BRITAIN. At the time of the Roman invasion, the northern part of the present county of Warwick was included in the territory of the Cornabii, one of the British tribes; the southern half in that of the Wigantes or Wicci.

ROMAN PERIOD. About A.D. 50, this part of the country was taken possession of by Ostorius Scapula, the Roman General in Britain. He built forts along the Avon and Severn, traces of which still remain. The Romans divided the whole country into six parts. Warwickshire was included in that called *FLAVIA CÆSARIENSIS*. Three or four of the Roman roads crossed the county, viz.:—**WATLING STREET**, **FOSSE WAY**, **ICKNIELD STREET**, and the **RIDGWAY**. The chief stations were **MANDUESSEDUM** now Mancetter, and **ALAUNA** now Alcester.

SAXON PERIOD. At the Saxon invasion Warwickshire was conquered by a tribe called the **WERINGS**, and from them it derived its name **WARINGWICK** or **WARWICK**. It formed part of the kingdom of **MERCIA**, one of the most powerful of the Heptarchy. The county was the scene of many fierce encounters between the Saxons and the Danes during the 10th and 11th centuries. The latter eventually established themselves in all the towns except Warwick.

THE MIDDLE AGES. During the Civil War in the time of **STEPHEN**, a conflict took place in this county between that monarch and the Earl of Chester, in 1147; Stephen having seized the castle of Coventry which belonged to the Earl.

In the **WARS OF THE ROSES** the southern half of the county sided with the Yorkists, being influenced by the celebrated "King-maker," Earl of Warwick. The northern

part supported the cause of Lancaster, following the example of Coventry, which had been won to their cause by Henry VI. and Queen Margaret, who paid personal visits to the place and constituted it and the surrounding villages, a county of itself.

IN THE GREAT REBELLION, the inhabitants of Warwickshire sided with the Parliament, being especially swayed by Lord Brooke. The first great battle of the war was fought at Edge-hill, near Kineton, in 1642, the Royalists being driven back. Warwick Castle was one of the strongholds of the Parliamentarians and was besieged, but without success, by the Royalists. Tranquility was restored about 1645, since which time no event of magnitude has brought the county into prominence.

2.—**Eminent Men.** Warwickshire has produced several names of note in the literary world, and amongst them the "mightiest mind of all," the "Immortal Bard of England," William Shakespeare. Of these celebrities the chief are:—

SIR WILLIAM DUGDALE, the celebrated antiquarian and writer. He was born at Shustoke near Coleshill in 1605. From his knowledge and research into antiquities he became noted at the court of Charles I., and was appointed first, a Pursuivant-at-Arms, and eventually Garter Principal King of Arms, and received the honour of knighthood. He published several works of great interest and value, chiefly of an antiquarian or historical character, but his great work is "THE ANTIQUITIES OF WARWICKSHIRE." He died in 1685 at Blythe Hall, which he had purchased.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, April 23, 1564, and was the oldest of 10 children. He was educated at the Grammar School in the borough. At 19 he married Ann Hathaway, and had 3 children, a son and 2 daughters, born to him before he was 21. About that time he left Stratford for London, where he became a player and dramatic writer. The superiority of his writings soon told, he speedily rose both in wealth and

fame, and became manager of his theatre. He was well patronized by the public and obtained the countenance and favour of Queen Elizabeth. Having realized a fortune large enough for his moderate ideas, he returned to his birth-place, Stratford-on-Avon, and purchasing a house called "The New Place," spent the rest of his life in peace, ease and retirement. He now probably wrote several of his best plays, but did not live long to enjoy either his fame or his retreat, for he died at the early age of 52 in 1616. His son died at the age of 13, his two daughters outlived him. His works for some time were not appreciated according to their merits, and he himself had probably little idea of the mighty influence they would wield or the fame that awaited him, and which has placed him, according to his deserts, on the topmost pinnacle of literature. His works are studied and appreciated more year by year, not only by the English nation but by all civilized peoples, while thousands flock annually to visit the town of his birth and the church which contains his bones.

MICHAEL DRAYTON, one of the early poets was born at Atherstone in this county. He described the rivers &c. of England. His chief work is called "Poly Olbion." He died 1631.

FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE was born 1554. He was a good poet, a liberal friend and patron of learning and literary men, and a man of high character.

DR. GREW was a celebrated botanist born at Atherstone. DR. WITHERING and DR. PURTON also eminent botanists were born in Warwickshire.

EDWARD CAVE, the original founder of the "GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE," was born at Newton in this county, 1691. He commenced life as an apprentice to a printer in London, and worked his way to wealth and influence. He published several literary articles and pamphlets previous to starting his celebrated periodical. He died in 1754.

HUMFRYE WANLEY, born at Coventry in 1761, was the author of some biographical and other works, but is

specially remarkable for the arrangements, and collections of, and treatises which he made on, old manuscripts.

FRANCIS HOLYOCK was born at Nether Whitacre in Warwickshire. He was a schoolmaster and afterwards rector of Southam. He was noted for his classical knowledge and for a revision of a celebrated Latin and English Dictionary. He died 1762.

RICHARD JAGO, born at Beaudesert, 1715, was vicar of Harbury and afterwards of Snitterfield. He was the author of some rather distinguished poems, as well as of several elegies, allegories, sermons, &c. He died in 1781.

Of HISTORICAL characters, the most important are the celebrated RICHARD NEVILL, EARL OF WARWICK, called the KING-MAKER. He became earl in 1449, and was of such power and importance that he held the balance between the rival houses of York and Lancaster during the wars of the Roses. He spent the greater part of his time in war and fighting, supporting for a long time the house of York, but eventually joining the Lancastrian side. He was slain at the battle of Barnet, 1471.

ROBERT GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE, stoutly supported the cause of the Parliament from the very first of the outbreak of Civil War, and by his influence greatly swayed the county in siding against Charles I. He was one of the best generals in the Parliamentary army and was killed at Lichfield, 1643.

CHAPTER VIII.

ADJACENT COUNTIES.

Warwickshire is surrounded by the following counties, of which a brief description is here given:—Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, and Worcestershire.

1.—**Staffordshire.** This county lies to the N.W. of Warwickshire, and is essentially a manufacturing and mining county. It is 60 miles long by 38 broad, and has a population of 857,333. The northern part consists of moorland, 1200 to 1500 feet high; the chief HILLS are the Weaver Hills and some branches of the Pennine Chain. The principal RIVER is the Trent and its tributaries, Sow, Tame, Blyth and Dove. It has good INTERNAL COMMUNICATION, both by canal, road, and railway. Its MINERALS are very important, especially the IRON which abounds everywhere, South Wales being the only district in the kingdom which exceeds it in the quantity annually produced. There are two COAL FIELDS, one in the north called the Potteries coal field, the other the Dudley coal field in the south. Dairy farming is extensively carried on in the north, its cheese rivalling Cheshire in repute. The chief manufactures are HARDWARE, carried on on the Dudley coal field, and comprising a district known as the "Black Country;" it is densely populated, the chief towns being Wolverhampton, West Bromwich, Bilston, Wednesbury, Walsall, &c. In the Potteries, the EARTHENWARE AND CHINA manufacture is specially carried on. The chief towns are Stoke-upon-Trent, Burslem, Hanley, &c. BOOTS AND SHOES are made at Stafford; there are large and celebrated BREWERIES at Burton, the other manufactures are chiefly GLASS, COTTON, &c. The county town is Stafford. Lichfield is a cathedral city.

2.—**Leicestershire** lies to the N.E. of Warwickshire, it is principally a manufacturing county. It is about 44 miles long by 40 wide, and has a population of 268,764. Leicestershire is chiefly table land and moderately hilly. The chief HILLS are Bardon hill (853ft.), Beacon hill, Breedon hills, and Cloud hills. The principal RIVERS are the Soar, Wreke, Welland, Avon, Swift, and Anker. It possesses a large COAL FIELD, that of Ashby-de-la-Zouch; the other MINERALS are limestone, quartz, granite, gypsum, &c. Half of the county is permanent pasture and a large portion of the rest arable. Leicestershire is celebrated for

its cattle, sheep, and horses, its dairy farming and its cheeses. The chief manufactures (which are of great importance) are WOOLLEN AND COTTON STOCKINGS and LACE; these are carried on chiefly in Leicester, Lutterworth, Loughborough, Shepeshed, Seleby, and Market Harborough. There are also some IRON FOUNDRIES. The county is well supplied with roads, canals and railways. Leicester is the capital, and is one of the most thriving towns in England, having increased in population from 68,000 inhabitants in 1861 to 95,000 in 1871.

3.—Northamptonshire lies on the east of Warwickshire and is chiefly an agricultural county. It is over 70 miles long and averages about 20 miles wide, and has a population of 243,896. Its surface is undulating and well wooded. The chief HILLS are Arbury hill (800), and several other small ranges with no distinctive name. The principal RIVERS are the Nen and the Welland. The MINERALS, forest marble, building and other stone, ironstone, limestone, clay, &c. Almost the entire county consists of rich pasture and arable lands, and a great deal of cattle breeding is carried on for the London market. The county has abundance of good internal communication in its canals, roads and railways. The chief manufacturers of Northamptonshire are BOOTS AND SHOES, which are made at Northampton; WHIPS AND LACE at Daventry, WOOL-STAPLING, MALTING, BREWING, &c. The capital is Northampton on the Nen. Peterborough on the same river is a cathedral city and an important railway junction. Other towns are Towcester, Wellingborough and Kettering.

4.—Oxfordshire lies to the S.E. of Warwickshire and is an agricultural county. It is 50 miles long by about 30 in its widest part, with a population of 177,956. The county is mostly level, the chief HILLS being the Chiltern hills, and one or two other ranges with no distinctive name; the greatest elevation is Broom hill (836). The principal RIVERS are the Isis, the Cherwell, the Evenlode, the Thame, and the Windrush. There is but one CANAL in

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the county, but by it and the Isis, Oxfordshire has good water communication with the rest of England. The greater portion of the county is arable, producing good crops of wheat, barley, turnips, &c. Cattle and sheep breeding is also carried on to a considerable extent. There are no MINERALS of importance. COMMUNICATION by road and rail is very good. There are no MANUFACTURES of much note. BLANKETS are made at Witney, but not to such extent as formerly; SHAG, a rough woolly cloth is made at Banbury; TWEED CLOTH at Chipping Norton; GLOVES and POLISHED STEEL at Woodstock; LACE MAKING is carried on by the country women. The capital of the county is Oxford, a cathedral city, and the seat of one of the most famous universities in the world. The other towns of note are Banbury, Henley, Witney, Woodstock, and Chipping Norton.

5.—Gloucestershire lies on the S.W. of Warwickshire, and is chiefly an agricultural and dairy county, but also possesses important manufactures. It is 64 miles long by 43 broad, and contains a population of 534,320. It is naturally divided into three parts called THE HILL, THE VALE, and THE FOREST. The first is formed by the Cotswold hills which run from N. to S. through the county; the second lies between the hills and the Severn; the third is occupied by the Forest of Dean to the west of the Severn. The principal RIVERS are the Severn, the Wye, the lower Avon, the upper Avon, the Frome, the Ledden, the Stroud, the Windrush, Colne and Thames. The county has plenty of good CANALS, ROADS, and RAILWAYS, Gloucestershire contains "THE BRISTOL COAL FIELD," the most southern in the island consisting of several detached portions on either side the Avon. MINERAL WATERS are found at Cheltenham and Clifton. Gloucestershire is extensively cultivated, and produces good crops of wheat, barley, &c.; but it is particularly famous for its DAIRY PRODUCE, its BUTTER and CHEESE being well-known and appreciated throughout the kingdom. CATTLE and SHEEP REARING are largely carried on, its breed of cows

and sheep (the Cotswold) being almost unrivalled. There are also extensive apple and pear orchards, from which CIDER and PERRY are largely manufactured. The chief MANUFACTURES of the county are CLOTH, HATS, FELT, STOCKINGS, LACE, BRASS, IRON-FOUNDRIES, GLASS, FLOOR-CLOTH, &c. The chief manufacturing towns are Bristol, Gloucester, Stroud, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Cirencester, &c. The largest place is Bristol, a cathedral city and important seaport, ranking sixth in the kingdom in point of population (182,524). The capital is Gloucester, also a cathedral city, on the Severn.

6.—Worcestershire lies on the west of Warwickshire, and is chiefly an agricultural county, though its north part is mining and manufacturing. It is 40 miles long by 35 wide, and contains a population of 338,848. Its surface is chiefly a fertile plain; two-thirds of the county is ARABLE, the rest chiefly PASTURE LAND. The soil is remarkably fertile and the crops abundant. The chief HILLS are the Malvern hills, with the Worcestershire Beacon (1,444), the Abberley hills, the Lickey hills, Clent hills, and the Breedon hills. The principal RIVERS are the Severn, Stour, Avon; Tene, Leddon, &c. The MINERALS are chiefly COAL, found in the N.W. or Bewdley coal basin, and in the N, a part of the Dudley coal field, STONE of various kinds, SALT, CLAY, &c. The county possesses important canals, good roads and railways. MINERAL SPAS exist in several places. Worcestershire is noted for its ORCHARDS and GARDENS. A great quantity of CIDER and PERRY is produced. Evesham is a great centre of market gardening. Sheep are fed in large quantities on the hills. The chief manufactures of the county are HARDWARE and iron. This is specially carried on in the northern part of the county, the principal towns employed in it being Dudley, Stourbridge, Old Swinford, Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Wolverley, Cradley, Belbroughton, Bewdley, Hartlebury, King's Norton, Redditch, Feckenham, &c. CARPETS and RUGS are made at Kidderminster; PORCELAIN and GLOVES at Worcester; GLASS at Stourbridge and Dudley; WOOLLENS,

WORSTEDS, BOMBAZINES, SILK, RIBBONS, PLUSH, COACH LACE, HORSEHAIR, chiefly at Bromsgrove and Kidderminster. There are also in various parts SALT WORKS, BREWERIES, MALTINGS, TAN, COKE, ALKALI AND VITRIOL WORKS, PAPER MILLS, HORN FACTORIES, &c. The capital is Worcester, a cathedral city, on the Severn. Malvern is celebrated for its mineral waters. The other principal towns have been already mentioned in connexion with the manufactures, &c.





